

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**CONTACT:**

Voleine Amilcar, ITVS

voleine_amilcar@itvs.org or 415-356-8383, ext. 244

**ITVS INTERNATIONAL AND THE KNIGHT CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDIA
TO LAUNCH THE 1H2O PROJECT ON WORLD WATER DAY***A Series of Video-Based Global Initiatives to Bring Attention to the Worldwide Water Crisis*

San Francisco, CA—ITVS International and the **Knight Center for International Media** at the University of Miami School of Communication, with funding from the **John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**, announce the launch of the **1H2O Project**, a series of film and video-based initiatives aimed at bringing awareness to the worldwide water crisis. The project's launch coincides with **World Water Day on March 22, 2009**.

ITVS International led the first phase of the **1H2O Project** by convening independent producers and an international team of public broadcasters from Bahrain, Colombia, India and South Africa at the International Public Television Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, in May 2008. The group committed to covering water-related issues in their programming and sharing resources and information with other participating broadcasters about the water crisis.

Each country received funding to produce a 30-minute film about a nationally relevant water issue in an effort to generate dialogue and action. On World Water Day, the selected broadcasters will fill a one-hour television slot in each respective country to broadcast their locally produced film about water alongside "1H2O," an un-narrated 30-minute film made by a talented multidisciplinary team at the University of Miami looking at water and how people use it around the world. On World Water Day, the selected broadcasters will fill a one-hour television slot in each respective country to broadcast their locally produced film about water as well as *1H2O*. Made by a talented multidisciplinary team at the University of Miami, *1H2O* is an un-narrated 30-minute film that looks at water and how people use it around the world.

"The **1H2O Project** builds on ITVS International's commitment to support international filmmakers to create documentaries that give more insight into the most pressing issues facing our global community. We are truly inspired by the programs that were created by international filmmakers about the water challenges in their countries. As is made clear by the footage they captured, the world needs to act urgently to avoid a serious water shortage," said Sally Fifer, president and CEO of ITVS.

"As a broadcaster we were elated to be chosen by ITVS International to participate in the **1H2O project**. For Señalcolombia, the production of *Waterland* has been an incomparable experience, a chance to explore our country's diversity and to do it from a vantage viewpoint, one that links our people to the water from a cultural perspective, taking into account social, political and economic factors that determine the relationship between many Colombians and this resource, indispensable for all living creatures," said Ricardo Restrepo, Director of Señal Colombia, Colombian national television.

-More-

Also on World Water Day, an international short-film contest, One Take, will launch on the project's website, <http://www.1h2o.org>. One Take will invite participants to submit a two-minute video monologue in response to the question: "Is water a basic human right?" Videos will be accepted in any language. The winner will be awarded US\$500. There will also be a prize for the qualifying entry that gets translated into the most number of languages using translation functionality created by DotSub.com. A series of online video contests are scheduled to take place over the next year in an effort to facilitate a global discussion about the world water crisis.

The campaign to bring news and information about the global water crisis through the **1H2O Project** is an initiative principally funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (<http://www.knightfoundation.org/>). To learn more about the **1H2O Project**, please visit <http://www.1h2o.org>.

ABOUT ITVS INTERNATIONAL

ITVS International is a division of Independent Television Service that promotes an international exchange of documentary films made by independent producers, bringing international voices to U.S. audiences and American stories to audiences abroad. Through a unique public-private partnership called the Global Perspectives Project, ITVS International administers the International Media Development Fund (IMDF) and *True Stories: Life in the USA*. The IMDF funds international producers and supports the American broadcast of their programs. *True Stories: Life in the USA* promotes a series of American independent films to audiences around the world. ITVS created the Global Perspectives Project in 2005 with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the U.S. Department of State. More information about ITVS International is available online at itvs.org/international.

About the Knight Foundation

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation promotes journalism excellence worldwide and invests in the vitality of the U.S. communities where the Knight brothers owned newspapers. Since 1950, the foundation has granted nearly \$400 million to advance journalism quality and freedom of expression. The Knight Foundation supports ideas and projects that create transformational change.

About the University of Miami Knight Center for International Media

The mission of the Knight Center is to integrate scholastic and creative energies to serve and transform the global journalism and communication profession. The center is engaged with media projects that are aimed at having impact across national borders. Please visit <http://www.knight.miami.edu>.

###